

From: Storm North
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/25/02 5:34pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Reader:

Pursuant to the Tunney Act, I am writing to comment on the proposed settlement of the United States vs. Microsoft antitrust case. The following is just one instance why I think the proposed is problematic.

Microsoft created intentional incompatibilities in Windows 3.1 to discourage the use of non-Microsoft operating systems

An episode from the 1996 Caldera v. Microsoft antitrust lawsuit illustrates how Microsoft has used technical means anticompetitively.

Microsoft's original operating system was called MS-DOS. Programs used the DOS API to call up the services of the operating system. Digital Research offered a competing operating system, DR-DOS, that also implemented the DOS API, and could run programs written for MS-DOS. Windows 3.1 and earlier were not operating systems per se, but rather middleware that used the DOS API to interoperate with the operating system. Microsoft was concerned with the competitive threat posed by DR-DOS, and added code to beta copies of Windows 3.1 so it would display spurious and misleading error messages when run on DR-DOS. Digital Research's successor company, Caldera, brought a private antitrust suit against Microsoft in 1996.

To whoever is reading this, I realize that you have had to wade through a lot of material. I very much appreciate your time and effort.

Sincerely,

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